





The
Way
of
Kings

Foreword

The Vedas, or books of sacred knowledge written in the Sanskrit language, are the most comprehensive commentary on human existence. Since the Vedas represent eternal truths, they are considered to have come into being at the time of the creation of the worlds. They originally existed only in the form of mantra, or sound vibration, and were passed down through an oral tradition from guru to disciple. These sacred writings deal with all aspects of life—sociology, psychology, philosophy, art and architecture, government, war and weaponry, politics and ethics—extending throughout hundreds of volumes.

As the mental and spiritual faculties of humans declined through the ages, it became necessary to write or record these Vedic truths. Primarily, the Vedas were recorded by the sage, Vyasa, who is considered to have been divinely inspired. Historians and scholars estimate the written record to have taken place between 4,000 and 2,500 B.C. The commentaries on the original Vedic truths, which were composed by various scholars, sages, and holy persons, are believed to have originated between 1,400 and 1,000 B.C.



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Sanskrit is the root of many of the world's greatest languages. It is called the "deva-nagari," literally, "from the cities of the gods," for it is believed that it is spoken by highly evolved, god-like beings who dwell among the higher planetary systems.

During the Vedic period in the area that is now known as India, there flourished a very advanced civilization. Their technology was not developed through the use of complex machinery but through the subtle power of mantra, or sound. Since sound travels through ether, which is the subtlest of all the elements, it has the ability to effect virtually everything. For example, warriors would shoot arrows consecrated with special mantras that could create a bank of fog, a rainstorm, or an explosion. Many things were accomplished with the technology of mantra by those skilled in its use, including the construction of buildings and the fulfillment of various desires.

Vedic India was a land teeming with riches and wealth—gold, silver, ivory, coral, precious gems including rubies, emeralds, diamonds and pearls, silks, rugs, exotic perfumes, sandalwood, rare spices, and medicinal herbs with almost magical healing properties. The major cities had beautiful palaces and temples of intricate architectural design boasting exquisitely sculpted façades hewn from precious metals that endure even today.

The Vedic kings received instruction on how to rule their kingdoms from the sages and holy persons among them and from the Vedas. Their kingdoms were brimming over with wealth and abundance and their

citizens were said to be happy and fulfilled.

The texts chosen for "The Way of Kings" come from an historical period when India was at her zenith, both materially and spiritually. It is a collection of Sanskrit maxims drawn from ancient Vedic histories, legends, codes of conduct and custom, dynastic traditions, scriptures, and political treatises. These tenets state the ideology, strategy, and methodology employed by ancient kings, including self-fulfillment, managing others, increasing wealth, expanding influence, and winning victory.

The translation remains true to the original texts and their intent. Hundreds of verses were gone through before the final selection of the text was made. I have tried to select texts that embody the ideology of the period while simultaneously offering the means to practically utilize those ideological principles.

While the chapter headings are natural divisions found in many of the source works, the texts need not be read in this order and may be opened at any page.

How does the term "king" apply to us today? I like to think of the word "king" in a more universal sense. A king is as an accomplished person, male or female, who is intent on understanding his/her life's purpose and bent on fulfilling that purpose to its full extent in a role of leadership in any field.

The Vedas are ancient texts but their truths are timeless and still apply in our present day society. We all seek increase and improvement in our own lives and

The first of these is the fact that the world's population is increasing at a rapid rate. This is due to a number of factors, including improved medical care, increased food production, and a decline in the death rate. The second factor is the increasing urbanization of the world's population. More and more people are moving from rural areas to cities, where they are concentrated in a small area. This has led to a number of problems, including overcrowding, pollution, and a lack of resources. The third factor is the increasing dependence of the world's population on fossil fuels. Fossil fuels are the primary source of energy for most of the world's population, and their use is increasing rapidly. This has led to a number of problems, including global warming, air pollution, and a depletion of natural resources.

As the world's population continues to grow, it is essential that we find ways to meet the needs of all people. This requires a number of changes, including a shift to renewable energy sources, a reduction in consumption, and a focus on sustainable development. We must also ensure that the benefits of economic growth are shared by all people, and that the environment is protected for future generations. Only by working together can we ensure a bright future for all.

The world's population is growing at a rapid rate, and this is leading to a number of problems. We must find ways to meet the needs of all people, and we must ensure that the benefits of economic growth are shared by all. Only by working together can we ensure a bright future for all.

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THE WAY OF KINGS

in the lives of others. The strategies, tactics, and conduct employed by the ancients demonstrate practical ways of achieving these ends. By applying the wisdom of the "The Way of Kings," you will come to understand the consequences of errant actions and the rewards of sound decisions. Minimizing mistakes and increasing successes is the basis of growth.

The broadest cross section of society including politicians, business leaders, athletes, and housewives, will find something of value in this book. Utilization of some of these principles will undoubtedly make you a more effective leader, which in turn may contribute to the transformation of our world.

Whether you are leading your own life or leading the lives of thousands, my hope is that this book may help you along your path.

—Drew Lawrence

THE WAY OF KINGS

SOURCES OF THE TEXT

Source	English Title	Author
Brihaspati Sutra	Maxims of Brihaspati	Brihaspati
Manu Samhita	Laws of Manu	Manu
Matsya Purana	Historical Treatise of Matsya	Matsya
Hitopadesh	The Book of Beneficial Instruction	Vishnu Sharma
Pancha Tantra	Book of Five Doctrines	Vishnu Sharma
Yajnavalkya Smriti	Laws of Yajnavalkya	Yajnavalkya
Vishnu Samhita	Laws of Vishnu	Vishnu
Garuda Purana	Historical Treatise of Garuda	Vishnu
Bhagavata Purana	Historical Treatise of the Supreme	K.D. Vyasa
Shukra Niti	Policies of Shukra	Shukra
Gautama Sutra	Maxims of Gautama	Gautama
Mahabharata	Great History of India	K.D. Vyasa
Bhagavad Gita	The Song of the Supreme	K.D. Vyasa
Krishnadeva Raya	Policies of Krishnadeva Raya	K. Raya
Masuraksha Niti Shastra	Policies of Masuraksha	Masuraksha

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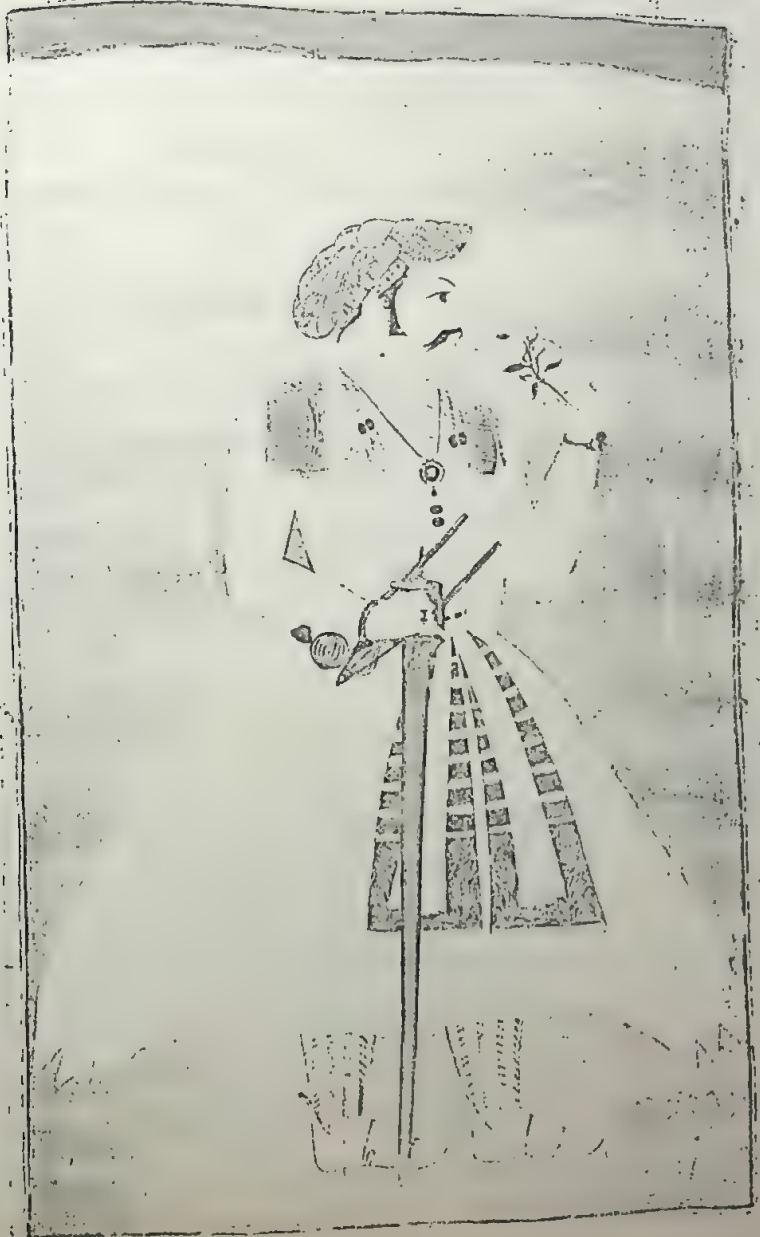
श्रीगुरुदेवाय

नमः



Chapter I

The King



When his merits from past good actions have been exhausted, a pure man descends to earth from the heavenly realms and is born as a king. Such a person is indeed great because he is the representative of God upon the earth.

As a calf finds its mother among a thousand cows, destiny selects its kings from among thousands of people.



THE WAY OF KINGS

The seven components of a kingdom are: the king, the advisors, the allies, the treasury, the forces, the fortress, and the subjects.

It is not birth but qualification that makes a king. Expertise, strength, and valor win respect, not ancestry.

The quality of gold is tested by four methods—rubbing, cutting, burning, and crushing. The quality of a king is tested by four means also—knowledge, conduct, honor, and the ability to make sacrifices.

The fourteen vices of a king are atheism, untruthfulness, anger, carelessness, procrastination, neglecting the advice of wise persons, idleness, restlessness of mind, taking counsel with only one person, consulting persons who do not understand the science of profit, abandoning a settled plan, revealing secret counsel, neglecting the accomplishment of beneficial projects, and acting without reflection.

THE KING

The six attributes of a king are clever speech, resourcefulness, intelligence in dealing with enemies, good memory, knowledge of ethics, and knowledge of politics.

The king is the embodiment of seven persons: father, mother, teacher, brother, friend, Kuvera, the god of wealth, and Yama, the god of punishment.

As the father, the king takes care of the needs of his children.

As the mother, the king nourishes his dependents and forgives their mistakes.

As the teacher, the king advises his subjects and provides for their education.

As the brother, the king takes out his own lawful share of the ancestral property, the common wealth of the people.

As the friend, the king is the confidant and the protector of his people.

As the lord of wealth, the king bestows benevolence, funding, and grants upon his subjects.

As the lord of punishment, the king keeps the peace in his kingdom by punishing offenders.



THE WAY OF KINGS

Self-mastery is the quality of a king.

Be vigilant in your control over the self. If you cannot respond to your will, how can you expect others to respond?

A king who can control the urges of his senses will be able to conquer all adversaries.

The cultivation of vice and bad habits is worse than death. The mind of a person addicted to vice sinks lower and lower into a hell of his own making.

By the hook of restraint, a king must discipline the elephant of his senses that tends to run amok through the forest of enjoyment. The mind, in constant pursuit of pleasure, must be controlled. When the mind is controlled, the senses can be conquered. If a king cannot subdue the passions of his own mind, how can he master the world extending beyond the sea?

THE KING

Sound, touch, sight, taste, and smell—any one of these senses is capable of causing calamity.

Sound: Attracted by the sweet music played by the hunter, an innocent deer is lured to his death.

Touch: Seduced by the promise of sexual enjoyment with the female, the male elephant falls into the grass covered pit.

Sight: Irresistibly attracted to the light, the moth is consumed by the flame of the candle.

Taste: Though it is the lord of the waters, the fish bites the hook of death prompted by its taste for flesh.

Smell: Though its wings enable it to fly anywhere, the bee becomes trapped in the sticky pollen of the lotus flower, enticed by its sweet smell.

Any one of these senses when uncontrolled can bring misfortune. When all five are unrestrained, destruction is inevitable.



THE WAY OF KINGS

The king should be of three temperaments— that of the autumn moon to the learned, that of the summer sun to the enemies, and that of the springtime sun to the subjects.

The autumn moon reflects the light of the learned and shines down its beneficence in the form of the harvest.

The summer sun exhausts and scorches all enemies who fall under its oppressive rays.

The springtime sun promotes new growth and the unfoldment of the subjects.

As long as the man beneath the crown maintains virtue, the king will be virtuous. Otherwise, both the king and the people are destroyed.

THE KING

There are three qualities of nature— contentment, desire, and delusion, and three types of kings who rule according to those qualities.

The king whose nature reflects contentment is faithful in his duty and protects his subjects by conquering their enemies inside and outside the kingdom. He performs sacrifices for the expansion of the kingdom and gives generously in charity. Being a true ruler, he is not ruled by the desire for enjoyment. At the end of life, his soul is freed and he does not take birth again.

The king whose nature is blinded by desire is driven to states of madness and attachment through his passions. He is convinced his ends can only be met through deceit and manipulation. His thoughts, words, and actions prove to be inconsistent from day to day. Lacking compassion for others, he is argumentative and confrontational. Due to false pride, he rejects good counsel. He is envious of others and covets what they possess. When eclipsed by the shadow of death, his soul takes birth among the lower animals.



THE WAY OF KINGS

The king whose nature is rooted in delusion is negligent in his duty and thereby fails to protect his subjects from crime and disease. Overpowered by anger, his rage is vented in acts of cruelty. Deprived of gratitude due to arrogance, he performs no sacrifice and gives no charity. He is lethargic regarding responsibility and is motivated only by the desire for sensual enjoyment. When torn from his attachments by Yama, the lord of death, his soul is imprisoned in the hellish worlds.

The king whose nature is ruled by delusion is praised by demons and dark forces.

The king whose nature is ruled by desire is praised by materialistic persons.

And the king whose nature is ruled by contentment is praised by wise and godly beings.

THE KING

One who is true to his word has the power to dry up the ocean itself. But if grief or misfortune may result from speaking the truth, avoid speaking.

A king should not criticize anyone behind his back. A wound caused by an arrow or sword may heal, but not the wound caused by sharp words.

Speak words of kindness. One who speaks angry words is destroyed by the weapon of his own speech.

A king most pleases the world by speaking words that captivate the heart. Even though he may give away much wealth and charity, the people will fear him if he uses harsh words.

The king who speaks pleasant words and encourages good deeds is a god in human form.



THE WAY OF KINGS

You are your own best friend or worst enemy. Leading a peaceful or distressful existence solely depends on you.

One who blames others is destroyed by his own negative thinking.

Thoughts that are beneficial and uplifting bring the mind under control.

Never abandon your duty or purpose, or sacrifice your wealth for the fulfillment of a desire.

A king who is blind may see through the eyes of others, but an ignorant king is always in the dark.

A king who is mild and easygoing is not respected.

A king who is gentle and kind is not loved.

A king who is just and fair will prosper according to his merits.

THE KING

Signs of the king's dissatisfaction:

When the king is displeased, he may bring about the downfall of friend and foe alike.

Though he may plant seeds of hope, he frustrates their fruition.

He appears to be angry though he feels no anger.

Though he seems satisfied and speaks sincerely, he cuts off his boons and his bounty.

When his virtues are narrated he ignores the narrator.

And when action is being done on his behalf he shows no interest.

Signs of the king's contentment:

When the king is pleased, he listens to the words of others with great eagerness.

When people arrive, he expresses his happiness to see them, inquires about their health, and offers them seats.

He is not apprehensive when asked for a private consultation.

He shows appreciation when others speak of him, even unfavorably.

When speaking, the king mentions others with favor. He gratefully accepts the gifts and offerings of others though insignificant.



THE WAY OF KINGS

Although faced with adversity, a king never resorts to actions that are beneath his stature. The regal lion, though faint with hunger, never eats grass or animals killed by others.

The king should so govern his life that the kingdom may remain in his dynasty through the continuity of his good deeds. The king is said to live as long as the kingdom continues in his family.

The king must be protected in every way possible, for if he dies, the whole kingdom suffers.

THE KING

The king is the originator of the era through his successes and failures and by his promulgation of virtue and vice. Shortcomings are to be attributed neither to the era nor to the people but to the king.

A single stick can bring a huge elephant under control.

A lone flame can light up the enveloping darkness.

A solitary king possessed of courage and determination can overcome the greatest obstacles.

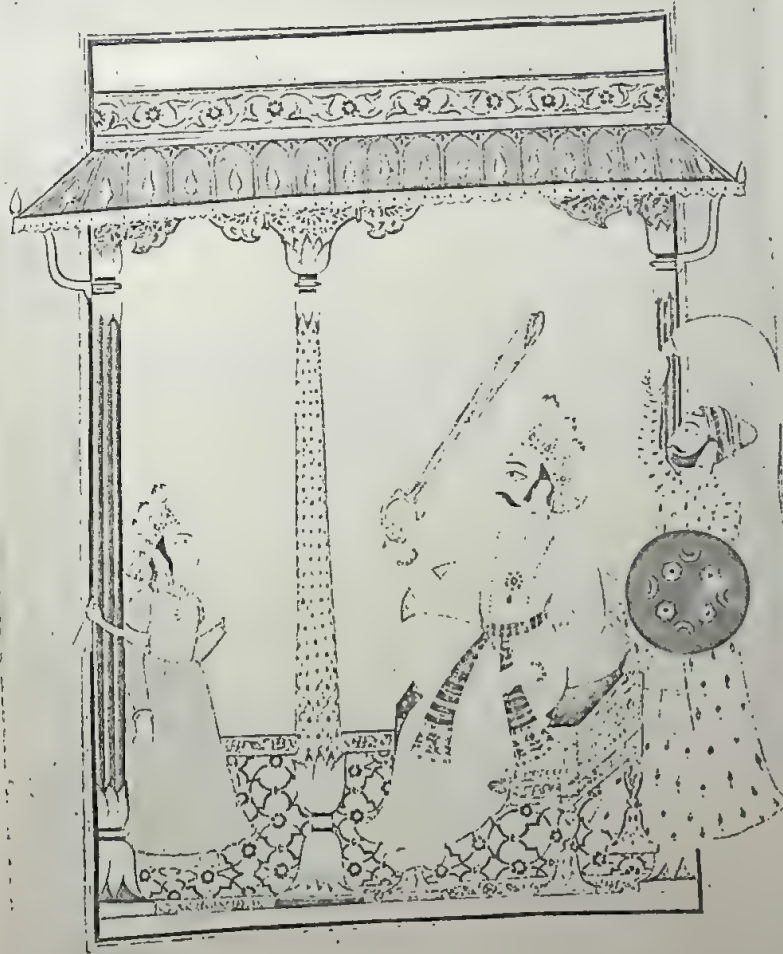




Chapter II

Advisors

मन्त्री



A king appoints advisors who are expert in various ways. In consultation with them, he implements his policies and fulfills his plans.

Even an easy task is sometimes difficult to accomplish for one person. How much more difficult is it for a king to govern an expanding kingdom without able assistance?

Appoint advisors of good character who are expert in management and administration, and who understand cause and effect.

THE WAY OF KINGS

The king's inner circle should be composed of persons who are strong and brave, loyal, capable of enduring hardship, and well-wishers of the king.

Confide in a person whose superiority is within himself. Choose a close friend who has much in common with you, as an advisor and confidante.

An arrow shot from a bow may or may not kill an adversary, but the advice of a capable advisor can destroy a host of enemies.

Persons who can raise your opinion of yourself while justly criticizing you are to be promoted.

One who is a well-wisher of the king should speak even if not called upon when there is danger, if a mistake is being made, or if the appointed time of an action is seen to be elapsing.

Those who eloquently point out the faults and weaknesses of others though unconcerned with their welfare are hypocrites.

ADVISORS

Errant actions of advisors and subordinates lead to the demise of the king.

A king whose physician, advisor, and spiritual guide are flatterers, quickly loses his health, wealth, and spiritual merit.

What is the value of an advisor who recommends the wrong course of action in an effort to conform to the will of the king? Irritating the mind of the king is better than bringing about his ruin.

Through steadiness in service a subordinate may rise to the position of supervisor. Through idleness in service a supervisor may become a subordinate.

The king who dismisses advisors who are devoted to the interests of the dynasty and kingdom and employs new advisors will be overpowered by the enemy and deprived of his kingdom.



The king's administrator should be well-trained in his duties and skillful in their application. Possessing a cheerful disposition, he must be calm in the face of adversity. His commitment to the king is demonstrated by his ethics in all actions. Though strong in mind, he is gentle in speech, which enables him to get along well with others while determining their intention.



The king's spiritual advisor or priest must possess an intellect which is able to penetrate the mysteries behind various scriptures and philosophies. He must be proficient in different forms of worship, ritual, and sacrifice which are capable of affecting circumstances within the kingdom in a practical manner. It is the duty of the spiritual advisor to illuminate the purpose of life through words of upliftment and blessing.

The king's physician should be accurate in diagnosis, an expert in the preparation of herbs and the prescription of medicines, and above all, a proven healer. He must be free from greed and thus incapable of being won over. The king should heed the words of such a physician, for his life depends on it.



The commander of the king's forces should be expert in the use of various tactics and weapons, and effective in training the troops. When entering battle, he must be able to understand the science of signs and omens. He should encourage and appreciate bravery among his men. In character, he must be strong, steadfast, durable, and courageous.



The ambassador who represents the king should possess an attractive appearance and be versed in the arts and sciences. He should display eloquence in speech and proficiency in debate. Knowing the intentions of others through hints, facial expressions, and gestures, he must be able to determine the proper time and place for action. Since his loyalty to his king is unquestionable, he accurately represents the word of the king.

The king's spy must maintain a quiet and unassuming profile. He should possess a familiarity with diverse customs and speak many languages. And he must be able to tolerate and function under adverse circumstances in order to submit true and accurate reports back to the king.

The king's astrologer must be skilled in reading physiognomy, the science of bodily markings. He must understand the effects of planetary movements on men and circumstances, and know how to neutralize the impact of natural disturbances.

There is no letter of the alphabet without the power to transform when arranged in the right combination of words and sounds.

There is no root or plant that does not possess medicinal properties when applied to fit the disease.

So also, there is no person who is completely without qualification.

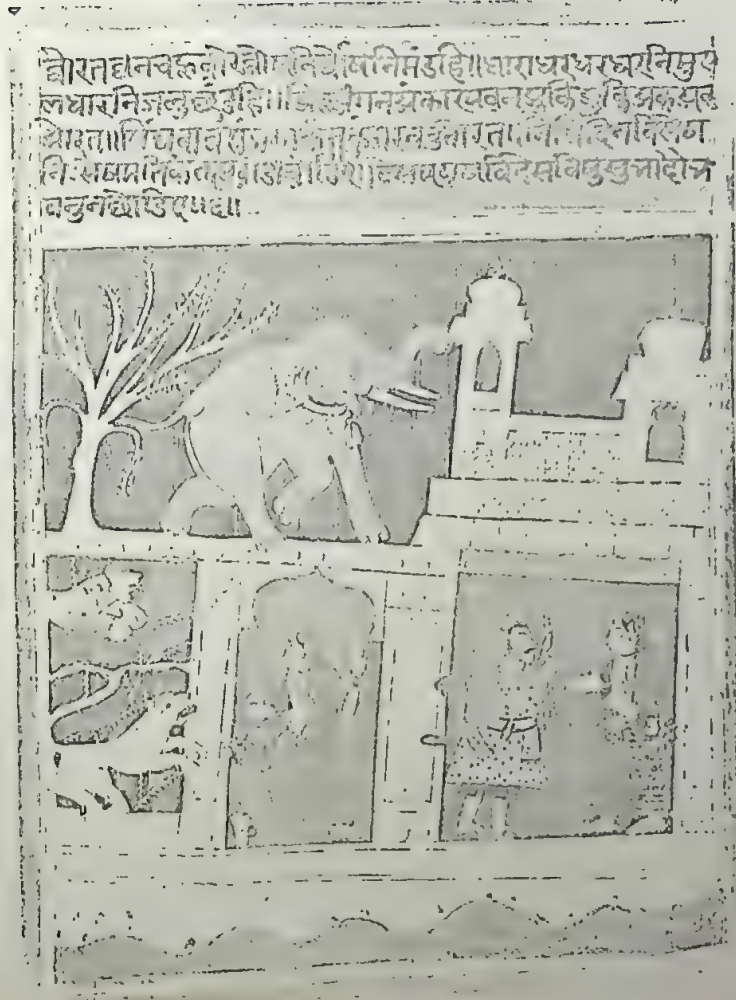
The rarest thing to find is the person who can formulate the letters into words, apply the plants to counteract the disease, and find the man to fit the task.



Chapter III

Kingdom

राज्य



Vines must be watered before they will blossom with fragrant flowers. A king must take care of his subjects if he wants to bring out their best.

When dealing with his subjects, a king should behave like a tigress with her cubs—she handles them with her teeth but never hurts them.

A king who watches impassively as his subjects, preyed upon by criminals, call out for help, is no different than a corpse.



All beneficial works which are performed under the protection of the king increase his wealth, kingdom, and length of life.

A king who is generous to foreigners and strangers while neglecting the welfare of his own people may initially enjoy the sweet taste of glory but will eventually be forced to swallow a bitter poison.

There are two sources of trouble—internal and external. If the internal condition of the kingdom is satisfactory, then any external danger can be overcome. However, a king besieged by internal problems will be defeated though he may be powerful externally.

Avoid the five means of alienating your subjects and associates: withholding favor; refusing rightful posts of honor or advancement; seizing the portion due to any one; delaying payment or promotion; and neglecting the righting of wrongs.

A bodily injury destroys the life of a living being. A kingdom in conflict destroys the life of a king. The fire arising from the heat of suffering subjects continues to blaze until it burns up the dynasty, wealth, and life of the king who is responsible.

The true supporter of the king does not reveal the secret actions or policies of the king. Even in his mind, he neither envies the king nor wishes ruin upon him.



One should sacrifice his life for the person who has maintained him even once. The best servant does not desert his master even in difficult times. The true master sacrifices his life for his servant.

The king takes the life of subordinates in warfare and other great deeds. The subordinate takes the wealth of the king in the form of wages.

By harsh words, low wages, severe punishments, and insults, the king foments in his subordinates the attributes of the enemy.

Those who are satisfied with their wages, honored with distinctions, and pacified with words of encouragement never desert their king.

The worst servants desire wealth.
The mediocre want wealth and fame.
And the best want fame because
reputation is the wealth of the great.

The best servant is he who is devoted to the master.

The mediocre servant is he who serves in exchange for remuneration.

The worst servant is he who is maintained by one master yet serves another.

The king must enable his people to perform their natural occupations for the benefit of others and as a glorification of God.





Chapter IV

Protocol

आचार

Look upon people as the earth looks upon them, with impartiality.

Honor and respect those who are experts in their fields, those who are rich in knowledge, and those who are wise and insightful. Protect the eminent and nurture the learned.

Strive to please your like-minded associates because such persons are as valuable as precious gems.





THE WAY OF KINGS

Do not be so consumed by your own interests that you neglect the interests of others. A king should show wisdom in accommodating others by attending to their likes and dislikes and ministering to them in a manner satisfactory to them.

When called by the king one should come immediately, leaving behind a thousand important actions.

Never suggest harm to a person with whom the king is well pleased or display the greatness of your own functions.

The king should never declare anybody to be his enemy nor himself to be anybody's enemy.

PROTOCOL

The inferior man does not know what ought to be done, but boasts of what has been done by others and claims himself to be an equal. The superior man does not reveal what he has done or what he is going to do. He does it.

The man who finds no satisfaction in teaching, learning, literature, the arts, music, serving others, spiritual persons, the spouse, valor, or reconciliation has either attained freedom from birth and death, or is an animal in the form of a man.

Even a little knowledge increases when used for the good of others. However, even the highest levels of learning lead to downfall when used for selfish gain or merely to find fault with others.

THE WAY OF KINGS

Offer advice even to a mentor who summons you to an unscrupulous act. But do not disregard even an inferior person when he prompts you to a worthy act.

The superior man is pleased and not angered when hearing of his faults. He makes an effort to discover his weaknesses and abandons them when pointed out by others. When praised for his good qualities, he does not display vanity.

The superior person shows gratitude for even the smallest benefit. The inferior person considers even the greatest benefit to be insignificant.

Teaching fools causes anger, not satisfaction, just as feeding a snake water produces poison, not nectar.

PROTOCOL

Display the trappings of your status at important meetings, gatherings, and negotiations.

The king should surround himself with persons who resemble him in dress, physique and form. He should dress in such a manner that he cannot be singled out in a crowd. In more critical circumstances, he should utilize disguise.



Observe the movements of the planets for, like the king, they govern the affairs of men.

Wear precious gems consecrated by mantras, for they possess healing qualities and counteract negative forces.

THE WAY OF KINGS

Do not accept money or gifts in private.
Do not covet the wealth of one whose friendship
you are trying to cultivate.

Never reveal your eagerness with regard
to a sale or a purchase.

A king should not command any action,
great or small, without a written order. A
written document is the best guide, for it is
human nature to err.

PROTOCOL

The envoys of other states must be
attended to with great care. They should be
honored so that they will acclaim your good
qualities before their own ruler and ensure the
friendship between both states.

When envoys are received the king should
always speak well of the rulers of their
respective states. At the same time, his
subordinates must point out the mistakes of those
rulers while the king credits them with good
intentions.



THE WAY OF KINGS

Even though they may be qualified or knowledgeable, persons of bad character are to be avoided. It is as dangerous as inviting a snake into your house.

But since the effects of previous actions, both good and bad, arise within the heart without fail, even a bad person will not always act as such.

There are two types of mind, honest and dishonest. You must know how to recognize duplicity, but never practice it yourself. If you are duped by a duplicitous person, it is better not to reveal it to others.

Use deception only with those who use deception and trickery against you. Otherwise, the use of deception will destroy your character and reputation.

Be straightforward with the honest, cunning with the crooked, joyful with the joyful, and sympathetic with the distressed.

PROTOCOL

Wind can uproot a tree, but cannot raise it again. A small-minded man can tear apart the work of another, but he cannot reconstruct it.

Do not place your faith in those who do not believe in you. Doubts or fears caused by such persons can uproot your foundation.

Those with powerful enemies desire help. Concubines desire the friendship of the wealthy. Dishonest servants desire the goods of the master. The learned desire knowledge. And unscrupulous kings desire manipulation and deceit.

Those who are committed to disruptive behavior should be restrained by the example of your conduct.

THE WAY OF KINGS

Know the significance of words and how to use them. Be cheerful in expression and fashion words that paint striking images. Listen long but understand quickly.

As singers do not sing to the deaf, do not speak to persons for whom words, good or bad, prove fruitless.

Through harsh words even those who have been friends since birth or those who have been served with gifts and honors become enemies instantly. It is impossible to remove from the mind the sting of sharp words.

Ornaments, strength, learning, wealth, or kingdom do not adorn a king as much as courtesy and gentleness.

PROTOCOL

Arising from sleep, spend time in meditation contacting your Higher Self and affirming your purpose. Following this, consider the duties of the coming day.

After your evening meal, take time to read, study, and offer prayers. Offering of prayers and performance of ceremonial rituals increases the health and prosperity of the king and leads to the expansion of the kingdom.

Knowing that youth, life, power of mind, beauty, wealth, and sovereignty are inconstant and undependable, a king should cultivate his relationship with the eternal, Supreme Being.

THE WAY OF KINGS

There are thirteen aspects of truth: impartiality, forgiveness, modesty, self-control, endurance, goodness, detachment, contemplation, dignity, fortitude, compassion, and abstinence from injury.

There are nine sources of human knowledge: direct observation, logic and reasoning, analogy, intuition, revealed wisdom from realized persons, books and scriptures, adventure and daring, craft and deception, and force.

The fruit of learning is wisdom and humility, that of wealth is sacrifice and charity, and that of strength is the protection of the good.

It is better to be poor first and rich after, just as it is better to be a pedestrian first and travel in a vehicle after. These lead to happiness with the world.

PROTOCOL

It is better to walk than own a vehicle that continually breaks down. It is better to be indifferent than confrontational. It is better to have no children than ill-behaved children. It is better to cover your feet with shoes than to cover the earth with leather. It is better to be ignorant than vain due to a little knowledge. It is better to live in a forest than in the house of another.

Debt, pregnancy, friendship with corrupt persons, and an unhealthful diet—these are pleasant in the beginning but lead to suffering in the end.

Excessive walking, excessive exercise, excessive fasting, and over-indulgence are sure invitations to the unwelcome guest known as old age.



THE WAY OF KINGS

Valor without weapons, a household without a spouse, war without unity of purpose, skill without someone to appreciate it, and danger without a friend result in sorrow.

The eye of knowledge sees with the most clarity. Truth is the greatest atonement. Attachment is the worst of all sorrows. Detachment is the source of lasting happiness.



PROTOCOL

The king should divide his day (twenty-four hours) in the following manner:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1 muhurta ¹ | — personal hygiene |
| 2 muhurtas ² | — spiritual practices |
| 1 muhurta | — physical exercise |
| 2 muhurtas | — balancing the budget |
| 1 muhurta | — distribution of awards and titles |
| 4 muhurtas ³ | — handling business; issuing orders and declarations of income and expenditure |
| 1 muhurta | — lunch |
| 1 muhurta | — study of the old in the form of history, and the new in the form of technology |
| 9 muhurtas | — consultations with advisors and officers |
| 1 muhurta | — military strategy and parading the troops |
| 2 muhurtas | — pleasure and recreation |
| 1 muhurta | — dinner with family |
| 2 muhurtas | — business with spies and informants |
| 1 muhurta | — study and prayer |
| 8 muhurtas ⁴ | — sleep |

1. One muhurta equals 48 minutes.

2. Two muhurtas equal 1 hour and 36 minutes.

3. Four muhurtas equal 3 hours and 12 minutes.

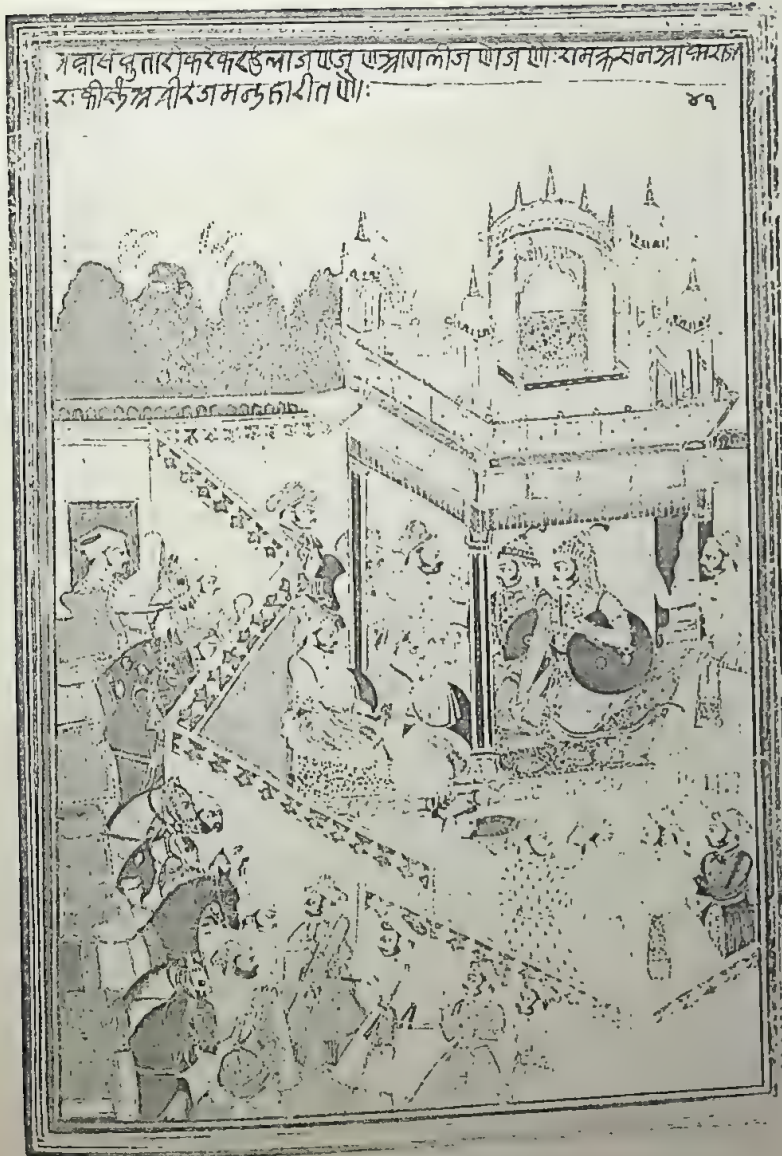
4. Eight muhurtas equal 6 hours and 24 minutes.



Chapter V

Wealth

धन



Strive to gain what has not yet been gained.

What has been gained, carefully protect.

Increase what has been protected by proper means.

What has been increased, bestow upon worthy persons.

These four methods must be applied unfailingly for the enhancement of humanity.

If a man does not desire what he does not possess, he exerts no effort for it and does not get it. If he does not properly take care of what he has gained, it will waste away by itself, even though it is used sparingly. And, if it is not used, what is the purpose of having it?



THE WAY OF KINGS

With wealth, guard against two things—mismanagement and waste. Neglecting to collect wealth, and giving it to unfit persons or countries at improper times is regarded as mismanagement. Using wealth for indulgence in vice or nefarious activities is considered to be waste. Do not engage yourself solely in the pursuit of wealth.

Wealth acquired by nefarious means, by excessive toil, or by bowing down to one's enemies is unworthy of a king.

The collection of funds and treasure is for the maintenance of the forces and the common wealth of the people, and for the performance of sacrifices and the bestowal of gifts.

The treasury is the root of the forces and the forces are the root of the treasury. By maintaining the forces, the treasury and the kingdom prosper and the enemy is destroyed.

WEALTH

When the king assures the protection of the citizens from violence, theft, corruption, and disease, he may exact a tribute from them.

The king should exact a moderate tribute from each citizen just as the bee takes a little food from each flower.

A king should take one sixth of his subject's income to maintain the forces for the protection of those subjects.

A king should not sever his own roots by exacting no tribute, nor should he destroy the roots of others by excessive greed.

The collector of taxes should be like the gardener who collects flowers and fruits only after nourishing the plants and trees.

As the sun shines upon the kingdom, the king returns the exacted tribute to the citizens.



THE WAY OF KINGS

The king's treasurer should possess wealth and have a knowledge of various types of markets, currencies, and investments. He must be free from greed and able to appraise things. Knowledgeable in the art of politics, he should consider profits and riches as valuable as life itself.

The wise king does not permit a day to pass without giving something in charity.

The head of charities should possess a charitable nature and have no interest in amassing wealth. Able to determine the merits of others, he can accurately evaluate those who are worthy of charity.

WEALTH

In this world, nothing subdues others more effectively than charity and simplicity. Even the moon that has waned through giving still shines with a beautiful crescent.

The king should carefully preserve the wealth that has been collected. As much trouble as it takes to earn wealth, it is four times more difficult to maintain it. That which is disregarded even for a moment is soon destroyed. There is no greater fool than the king who knows how to earn but not maintain what has been earned. His efforts are in vain.





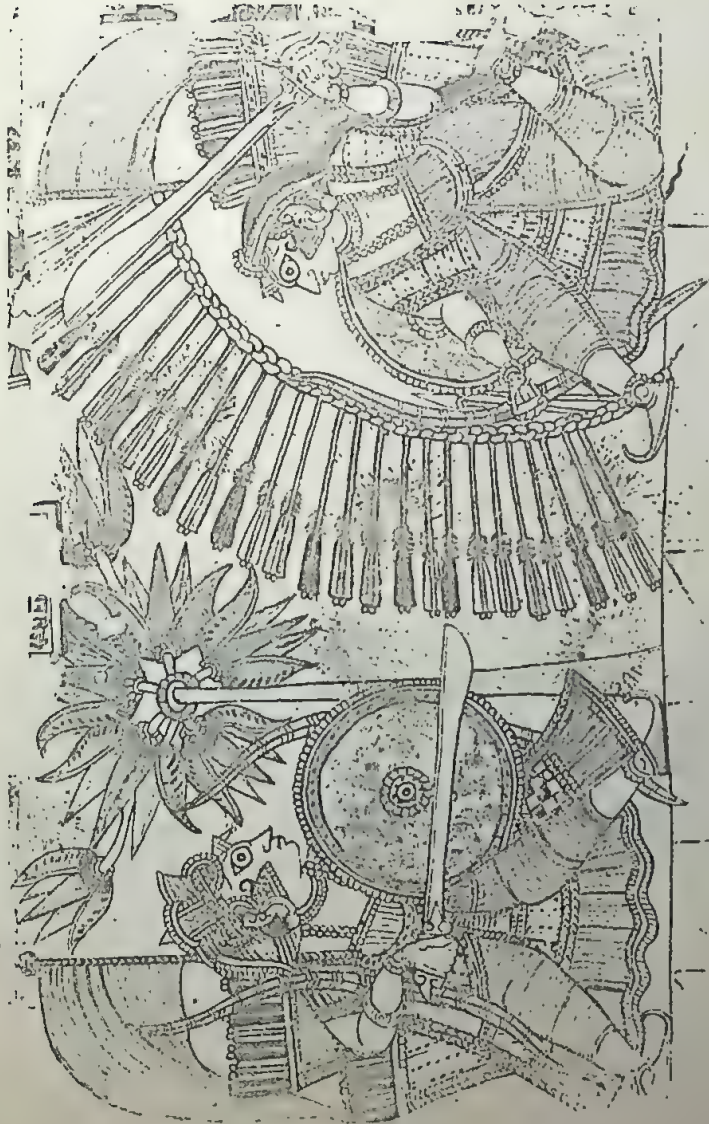
Chapter VI

Policy

नीति

The fruit of successful policy is the attainment of wealth or advantage, personal fulfillment, freedom, and a resulting circumstance which benefits all.

Do not enforce values and policies that are opposed by the world even though you may deem them correct. Those whose customs were practiced by their ancestors and have been received through tradition are not to be condemned for following those customs.





THE WAY OF KINGS

What is regarded as vice in one place is virtue in another. Virtue is that which is accepted by many. Vice is that which is condemned by all. Morality and ethics are complex and their application is relative to each circumstance.



POLICY

There are four methods which successfully accomplish policy—conciliation, gifts, dissension, and force.

Conciliation should first be employed. Conciliation consists of using positive and pleasing words to establish mutual agreement.

If conciliation is ineffective, then the policy of winning over another by gifts and favors is next in preference. Almost everyone can be appeased by gifts, including good people and enemies.

When gifts and favors are fruitless, uproot adversaries through the policy of dissension by pitting them against one another as a thorn is removed with the aid of a thorn. The king should not personally launch a policy of dissension. To be most effective, it should be executed by an agent of the king.

When dissension does not accomplish policy, force must be applied. Force is to be used only as a last resort when all other resources have failed.



THE WAY OF KINGS

A king should never collectively rule his own subjects through the policies of dissension or force but only through conciliation and gifts.

Inspire confidence in the enemy by smiles, humility, kind words, praise, confessions of guilt, service, gifts and favors, honors, and even oaths.

As rivers never abandon their downward course, prosperity never deserts a king who bows down to the powerful at the proper time.

Honor and glory must be sacrificed in the fire of indignity and humility if it leads to the achievement of the desired objective. For it is folly to lose the objective.

POLICY

Policy and action, the basis of success, must be discreetly protected. People should not know of your plans until they bear fruit.

It is better not to speak of matters with persons who are not conversant with such matters, even though they are your friends.

Conceal your policies and weaknesses as a turtle hides his limbs within his shell.



THE WAY OF KINGS

A consensus of opinion expressed by a majority is more powerful than the king. A rope made of many threads is strong enough to drag the lion.

The advice of the gentle and the timid should never be sought in fearful circumstances that threaten warfare.

If the unity of thieves can lead to the destruction of the state, cannot the unity of the king and his officers result in the downfall of the enemy?

POLICY

Always know the proper time for fruition of your plans.

What cannot be achieved through policy and its proper application? Can iron not be turned into liquid? Can water not extinguish fire? Can the feet of a man not be placed upon the head of an elephant?



Chapter VII

Action

कारण



The fulfillment of an action depends on two factors—destiny and human effort. Destiny is the current manifestation of the human efforts from past lives.

As a chariot cannot move with only one wheel, destiny is not fulfilled without human effort.

People of wisdom and character are devoted to action. People without strength and conviction depend on destiny. Prosperity forsakes those who rely on destiny and favors those who act.

THE WAY OF KINGS

Maintaining your kingdom or position is accomplished through growth and expansion, which require action.

Accurately evaluate the immediate and ultimate consequences of all undertakings, as well as the positive and negative aspects of all past actions.

A king who knows the future results of his actions, good and bad, who decisively and quickly resolves upon his present course, and who understands the consequences of his past deeds, will not be conquered.

Assertive and enterprising actions carried out by those who are careless, inconsistent, or unfortunate do not succeed.

Actions that are motivated by overaffection, arrogance, selfishness, or anger, should be abandoned. If they cannot be abandoned, they should be delayed.

ACTION

When unsure of the best course of action or waiting for the most opportune time to act, the king should resort to duplicity. He should display one posture while carrying out another.

Action which is undertaken in the company of associates, family, friends, as well as expert and thoughtful persons is considered to be the best.



THE WAY OF KINGS

The Six Strategies of Action are:

1. Alliance — peace or alliance, coming to an agreement or understanding with the enemy
2. Waiting — surrounding the enemy and waiting for him to act, or acting indifferently toward him
3. Redistribution of Forces and Resources — employing a stratagem or tactic through the manipulation of forces and resources
4. Mobilization — assuming a threatening posture or launching an expedition to further one's own objectives and destroy the interests of the enemy
5. Aggression - using force to conquer the enemy
6. Seeking Protection - retreating or seeking the protection of a stronger king

ACTION

Plan for the acquisition of wealth with the eyes of a crane, employ a variety of postures like a peacock, offer the affection and devotion of a dog, strike with the ferocity of a boar, and display the valor of a lion.





Chapter VIII

Justice

दण्ड

As the sun shines everywhere brightening all without distinction, a king shows equal justice to all.

If a king does not vigilantly punish the deserving, the strong will roast the weak, like fish on a spit.

THE WAY OF KINGS

Retribution, the active arm of the law, aids the king in the protection of all beings. In deference to retribution, all people follow their respective paths.

Retribution remains alert when everything else is asleep, and maintains the virtue of the people.

Just punishment pleases everyone. Unjust or inappropriate punishment produces wrath. Where retribution is discriminately applied, people live peacefully.

Restraining his anger against an offender, the king should unleash it at the proper time. The archer waits till his aim is fixed on the target before releasing the arrow.

JUSTICE

If the king neglects to enforce law and order by using punishment when necessary, he will be swallowed by the fire like an unsuspecting moth.

Punishment that fails to compensate for the crime committed casts a shadow upon the king's name, causes his kingdom to crumble, and hinders the natural evolution of his next birth. Proper and effective punishment leads to acclaim, victory, and improved karma.

Just punishment cannot be administered by a king who is driven by greed, whose character is unevolved, or who possesses no self-control.

A king who neglects his duty with regard to the administration of justice will be struck down by injustice, which will uproot his family, his property, his lands, and eventually, his entire kingdom.

But the fame of a just king spreads everywhere like drops of oil upon water.

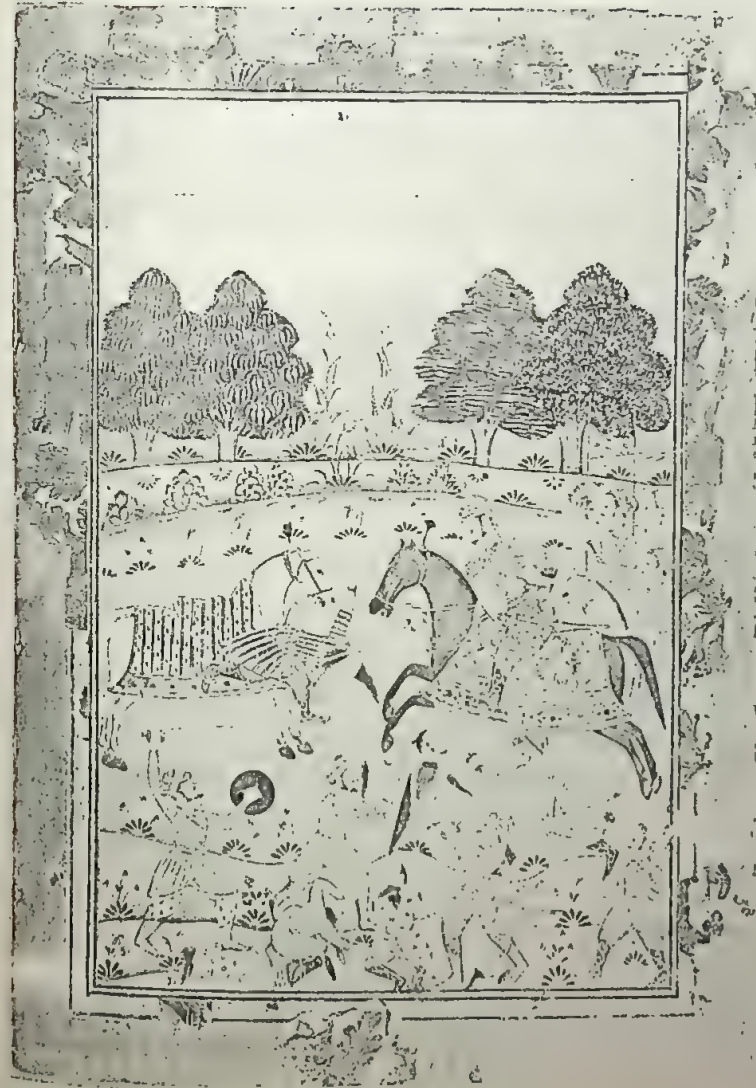
Chapter IX

Victory

विजय

If you feel satisfied with your accomplishments after reflecting upon your methods, you have achieved the highest success.

Since the forces are the chief means of overpowering the enemy, the king should carefully maintain a formidable force.



THE WAY OF KINGS

Forces are of two kinds: one's own and those belonging to the allies.

Those again are of two kinds: long-standing or newly recruited.

The forces that belong to the state are maintained through wages.

The forces that belong to the allies are maintained through good will.

Even when powerful, display weakness. Enter the enemy's state and become instrumental in serving his interests.

Study the state and conditions of an opponent by accepting a position of service within his state or by interacting in the role of a trader. When you are well established, win over the entire territory.

VICTORY

Waging war against a powerful enemy is like a cloud trying to move against the force of a strong wind.

Carry your enemy upon your shoulders as long as he is more powerful than you. But when his strength has been reduced, throw him down and break him like a vessel upon a stone.

The king should surround and coerce an enemy whose forces and allies have been reduced, who has taken shelter in his fortress, who approaches with an inimical disposition, who is addicted to sense-pleasure, who plunders the people's wealth and goods, and whose advisors and troops have been alienated.

Compromise the opponent by interrupting his supplies of food and provisions. Destroy the enemy's troops by alienating them with gifts, real and counterfeit.

THE WAY OF KINGS

Stalk your opponent by assuming a posture of helpfulness toward him.

Offer your enemy promises and support as though he were a friend. Like a hunter who approaches his prey, step by step, close in for the kill.

A strong king is like fire. He allows his enemies to approach. But if they come too close, he burns them.

A rival who possesses good character is actually a friend.

Wipe out all vestiges of debt, fire, or enemies, for they will rise up again and again.

VICTORY

Between two opponents, victory or defeat in battle is always uncertain. Therefore, it is best to avoid conflict.

When death is certain if fighting does not take place, but fighting may provide a chance to go on living, this is declared to be the time for battle.

If every means at your disposal has been exhausted, then fight in a manner that will ensure a complete victory over your enemy.



THE BATTLE

There are two kinds of battles—that which is undertaken for one's own purposes and that which is fought on behalf of a friend.

If there is a need for confrontation, it is best embarked upon when you are at the height of your power and your subjects are exceedingly content. When your forces are satisfied, strong, and happy and those of your enemy the reverse, it is an opportune time to march against him.

Accompanying his forces, a king should lead them into battle under his own influence. Even a dog acts like a lion when led on by his master.

The earth swallows the king who refuses to fight and the guru who declines to travel just as a snake swallows animals who live in holes.

The man who deserts his ally or his king, or flees from the field of battle finds himself in the hellish planets after death.

The death of the brave warrior killed in battle is not regrettable, because it purges him of karmic reaction and promotes him to the heavenly realms.

The exalted position that is achieved by sages after long and arduous penances is immediately attained by warriors who die in the field of battle.

If your forces and resources are weakened, bide your time, conciliating your rivals with continued efforts. Inaction is appropriate in two circumstances—when you have been gradually weakened as a consequence of your previous actions, and at the request of a friend.

THE WAY OF KINGS

When you know your rival is stronger in every respect, you must cause a division in his forces in order to accomplish your purpose.

Seeking the shelter of another is useful in two situations—for the purpose of attaining an advantage when besieged by rival forces, and when you want to become known as the protégé of a powerful king.

Like a crane, plan your undertakings patiently and thoughtfully. Like a lion, act with heroism. Like a wolf, attack your prey. And, like a rabbit, retreat.

VICTORY

WINNING VICTORY

Upon winning victory, offer your gratitude to God and those who contributed to your conquest. Present gifts and award favors to the deserving. Inspire your subjects with declarations of victory.

The king should enter the conquered city accompanied by the auspicious sound of trumpets. He should protect the conquered people as he would children and make them his own.

Institute peaceful measures when you know that your future superiority is certain and that you will suffer little or no immediate injury. However, never trust an enemy even after concluding peace.

THE WAY OF KINGS

As a small fire fed gradually with little sticks soon becomes capable of consuming large trees, the king who increases his power by making friendships and alliances soon becomes capable of subjugating even the most powerful opponent.

Give up the association of friends who are former enemies, who quarrel unnecessarily, or who act against your will.

Do not maintain friendships with persons who are like birds who fly away when the pond dries up.

Increase your friends and allies by the reliability of your word.

VICTORY

The friendship of a worthy person is like a stream that flows to a waterfall. It is narrow at the outset, increasing little by little, until it attains a powerful momentum from which it never returns.

A king who continues the quest to fulfill his purpose and achieve his goals despite obstacles, setbacks, and even failure, always rises triumphant. Even an energetically launched campaign may meet with impediment. Therefore, a king must persevere until he commands success.



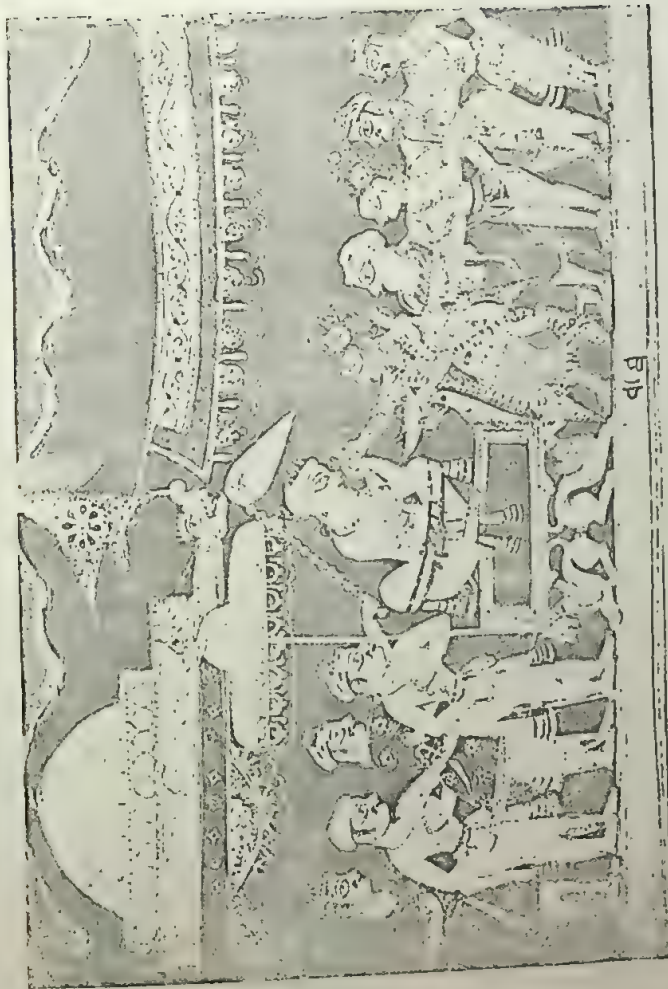
Chapter X

Conclusion

सिद्धि

The king has been conceived as the staff of justice for the preservation of all beings and for the glorification of the Creator.

Arrange everything in such a manner that no ally, neutral, or foe may cause you harm. This is the essence of policy and statesmanship.



THE WAY OF KINGS

Duty to self and others is the principal concern, not personal gain. Satisfaction which is enjoyed at the expense of right or fairness is a false friend. Act for the benefit of all.

As the earth nourishes all beings, the king nourishes the entire kingdom.

As fire consumes all, the king consumes all opposition.

As the sun draws moisture from the earth, the king exacts a tribute from his subjects.

As rain sustains all life, the king rains forth sustenance upon his kingdom.

And, as air penetrates the depths of all beings, the king penetrates the hearts of his people.



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